

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 is the only independent claim. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the method step of melting the sealing frit is "after the pressure of said chamber reaches atmospheric pressure." In addition, dependent claims 18-21 have been added to define the invention more fully. These amendments are not new matter at least because they find support in the non-limiting embodiment described on page 11, lines 5-21 of the present Specification.

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority and receipt of the priority document.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the reference listed on the PTO-1449 form submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement on January 22, 2003 and for forwarding an initialed copy of the form to Applicants' representative.

Applicants thank the Examiner for accepting the drawings filed on January 22, 2003.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1 and 12-17, alleging minor informalities.

With respect to claim 1, the Examiner objects to Applicants' use of the phrase "the steps of." Although this phrase is considered to be clear and no amendment is required to ensure patentability of the claims, in deference to the Examiner's preference for alternative phraseology, Applicants have amended the claim by deleting "the steps of."

With respect to claims 12-17, the Examiner has requested that “hardening” be change to --solidifying--. Although the phrases used in these claims are considered to be clear and no amendment is required to ensure patentability of the claims, in deference to the Examiner’s preference for alternative phraseology, Applicants have amended the claims as suggested by the Examiner.

These amendments do not narrow the claims nor affect their patentability. Therefore, no estoppel is inflicted by the amendment.

In addition, with respect to claims 15-17, the Examiner objects to Applicants’ use of the phrase “the group consisting of.” Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this objection because these claims are written using the proper Markush Group language (*see* MPEP §2173.05(h)).

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and §103

Claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 12, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Park et al. (US 6,332,821). Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Park in view of Nishimura (US 6,309,272). Claims 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Park in view of Dynka et al. (US 5,697,825).

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1 at least because Park does not teach or suggest all of the recitations of the claimed invention. For example, Park does not teach or suggest a method of manufacturing a plasma

display panel that includes the step of melting the sealing frit in the chamber by further heating the front substrate, rear substrate, and sealing frit “after the pressure of said chamber reaches atmospheric pressure.”

In contrast, Park’s method for fabricating a display device merely involves melting the frit glass 23 when the pressure of the heating chamber 31 is below atmospheric and air is evacuated from the heating chamber (col. 5, lines 12-21). Then, when the temperature of the heating chamber 31 is later cooled, gas is supplied to the heating chamber until the pressure reaches atmospheric pressure (col. 5, lines 29-37).

The method of the present invention shortens time period for manufacturing a plasma display panel by shortening the exhausting time of any impurity gas. Since the melting of the sealing frit occurs after a pressure inside the chamber reaches atmospheric pressure, any impurity gas that is discharged when the frit is melted would be exhausted from the chamber while the internal pressure of the chamber is being lowered (Specification, page 6).

As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1 at least for the reasons discussed above. Applicants also request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of dependent claims 2, 5, 8, 11, 12, and 15 at least because of their dependency from claim 1.

In addition, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, and 17 at least because of their dependency from claim 1 and because Nishimura, which the Examiner applied in an attempt to show a crystalline glass frit,

does not cure the deficiencies in Park discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicants also respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 9 and 10 at least because of their dependency from claim 1 and because Dynka, which the Examiner applied in an attempt to show a frit having a level difference defining gaps between substrates and a frit continuous to an edge of a substrate, does not cure the deficiencies in Park discussed above with respect to claim 1.

New claims 18-21

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner allow new claims 18-21 at least because of their dependency from claim 1 and because the prior art applied by the Examiner, alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest that the pressure inside said chamber reaches atmospheric pressure when oxygen gas is introduced into the chamber.

Conclusion

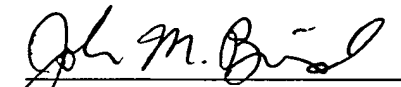
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 10/050,972

Docket No. Q68160
Art Unit 2833

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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